

Edward Frederick Moldehnke

The Wisconsin Synod's

First Seminary Professor

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Edward Frederick Moldehnke: The Wisconsin Synod's First Seminary Professor

Towards the end of the Wisconsin Synod Convention of June, 1866, it was resolved to call Adolph Hoenecke to the Seminary as inspector and theological professor. The next thing we read is that Moldehnke resigned his office as professor and editor of the Gemeinde-Blatt. His resignation was not accepted as valid. In the next session the Synod resolved to call a Reiseprediger as soon as possible. They called Moldehnke. Some expressed amazement that Moldehnke would leave his teaching position for the Reiseprediger position. At the very close of the assembly Moldehnke inquired whether his resignation had been accepted; he was informed that it was not accepted.

This series of events was but the bitter climax of a long process of alienation between Moldehnke and his adversaries (whether real or imagined); the bitterness was not to subside quickly, for in an article published over $4\frac{1}{2}$ years later (though perhaps written as early as 1868) Moldehnke looks back on his years at the Seminary and says,

The instruction of the students is a source of great difficulty, since some of them have learned next to nothing, while some come from the Prima class of a gymnasium or from a German university. Providing for their support is a major task for everyone because our students had to be totally supported by us; sometimes the students would go out collecting produce for the Seminary in the neighboring congregations and would return with several heavily laden wagons; at other times the professor would go out to gather money, and would bring in just enough to keep things running for another month. Like all pioneers, when I gave up the Reisepredigt and took on the founding and leadership of the theological seminary, I had an infinite amount of work of every sort: teaching the most widely diverse subject matter, worrying about all possible needs, being threatened time and again with shortages; and the seminary contributed quite a bit to my assignments; to keep it going and not let it fall apart was a sacred point of honor for me; and then in addition serving a large congregation as vacancy pastor - and to top it all off there were several brothers who didn't realize at that time, but were to realize later, that I was both then and afterwards unfairly burdened.¹

Edward Frederick Moldehnke was born in Insterberg, East Prussia, on August 10, 1836. He studied at Halle, and was Tholuck's amanuensis. Early in 1859 he became the rector of a German gymnasium, but in July of that year he was needed as an instructor of the gymnasium.² In 1860 he was contacted by Meyeringh of the Langenberger Verein as a prospect for the Reisepredigt in Wisconsin. He finally arrived in August of the following year, after a long, apparently serious struggle to convince his wife to go. In his letter of November 16, 1860, Meyeringh quotes from a letter Moldehnke had written the previous month,

'If it was up to me I'd gladly go to America right away; I'd have no regrets about leaving my secure position, as well as all prospects for this life, in order to gain a secure position in heaven. But 1 Corinthians 7:33 is impressing me with its grim reality. God has lovingly blessed me by sending me my first child, and now my wife isn't very eager to move with me. I really hope that my en-

thusiasm will overcome her resistance, but of course meanwhile time is being wasted. But there will always be a warm spot in my heart for your work.'

According to Meyering, Moldehnke said he wanted to stay

'a long time, ~~even~~ permanently, in America, and there with great pleasure to teach, so that I may be a teacher and preacher at the same time in Wisconsin.'

Two months later the Langenberger Verein and Moldehnke had still not succeeded in persuading Mrs. Moldehnke. Meyering reports, "...our friendly but urgent plea goes in her direction, but without trying to compel or persuade his wife to take this step, since such forced morality in this area always turns out bad in the end." But finally, by the time Meyering wrote his letter of February 18, 1861, she had consented to go. To what extent this once-reluctant young woman influenced Moldehnke's attitude once he was in America, no one can say. His own emotions were strong enough, apparently, to account for virtually all of his actions. And if his wife added more fuel to the fire....

There's no question about the fact that Moldehnke was tremendous as a Reisprediger. Eichler of the Berliner Verein has nothing but praise for his abilities in this area (with some reservations about Moldehnke's relatively strict confession-
alism, of course). At the 1863 Convention the Synod gave him a vote of thanks for his work as Reisprediger after he was appointed as Seminary professor (p31). His writings, which are relatively extensive, contain almost nothing but affection for the Reispredigt, even though he enjoys pointing out the difficulties which he encountered; he shows a definite concern for every individual he met, an obvious warmth for witnessing about Jesus Christ. He shows a special concern for Indians, as is indicated in the 1864 Convention Report (p15), as well as in his Reisebericht of June 5, 1862, in which he describes an incident in which a stage driver passed up an Indian who wanted to board the stage; Moldehnke says, "What must the Indian have thought of the white men?" He also demonstrates a concern for the prisoners at Waupun in his letter to Reim, December 23, 1863, and by virtue of the fact that he visited this institution at least once during his travels. He definitely believes that the Reispredigt is valuable, especially in the light of the thousands who are without a regular minister.³ Kowalke goes so far as to say, "There is every indication that Moldehnke's heart was in missionary work and not in the classroom."⁴ When first asked to consider the position as seminary professor, he stated that the Reispredigt was too important to leave (1863 Convention, p19), and when he was appointed to the Seminary he immediately asked for three months in the fall to devote to the Reispredigt (p24). And yet, he realized that the Reispredigt wasn't the final answer for the hundreds of German Lutherans scattered around the state. Even in his first Reisebericht (December 2, 1861) he complains that the whole setup is too sporadic; as soon as you leave, the people turn to the Methodists; Wisconsin

is too big for one man to cover - could his brothers give him suggestions on which locations are most important to cover, so that he won't have to waste so much time looking for leads? And again in his third report (August 27, 1862) he closes by stating that he has had little success due to the infrequency of his visits. He says,

It would be better to train more preaching candidates each year than to travel through the congregations so sporadically. The people still go to the Methodists on Sundays. God send workers into His harvest!

Aside from his experience as an educator in Europe, perhaps this was why the Synod chose him to be their first seminary professor. Whether it was wise of them to make such an abrupt end of the Reisepredigt or not is another question; in actual fact it did not turn out to be such an abrupt end after all, since Moldehnke squeezed periodic missionary trips into his busy schedule; from our point of view he would be guilty of often forsaking his duties as a professor. At such times Hoenecke is said to have filled in for him at the Seminary three days a week.⁵ Moldehnke reported at the 1864 Convention (p7) that he had made two small trips during the previous winter, covering 23 stations, including the prison at Waupun. During the following school year, however, he couldn't possibly leave his work (1865 Convention, p4), but the next year he made a nine-week trip to Minnesota, returning on May 26, four weeks after the school year ended; at the 1866 Convention he justified this trip by stating that those four weeks were actually his vacation time; so really the instruction had been interrupted by only five weeks! And besides, his absence gave his students an excellent opportunity to learn English (p16, p14). Besides his collection trips, which probably consumed even more total time than his missionary trips, there must have been a significant amount of time lost to the seminary work. It's not unlikely that this was a motivating factor in the Synod's call to Hoenecke as a second professor. The Board of Trustees, however, didn't object at all to such an apparently careless attitude on Moldehnke's part. For one thing, Streissguth had given his approval for the nine-week trip (1866, p14), and the Board itself asked for official permission for this trip post facto (p21); having received this approval, they officially asked the Synod to thank Moldehnke warmly for his zeal and activity at the Seminary; this was done in the next session (p25). Perhaps, too, they were interested in gaining the good will of the German Vereine which resulted from such endeavors. And, of course, turning out ministers to serve congregations goes hand in hand with serving as a minister yourself; so possibly they weren't all that concerned about what Moldehnke was doing, as long as he was ministering. And undoubtedly seeing the need for ministers during his travels made Moldehnke that much more zealous to train ministers.

But the overwhelming reason for choosing Moldehnke rather than someone else as seminary professor was probably pressure from the Berliner Verein; and this

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pressure came, ostensibly, on account of Moldehnke's health. In his letter of October 1, 1862, Eichler of the Berliner Verein sends his sympathy for Moldehnke, and asks whether it would be possible for Moldehnke to rest (at least physically) for the winter, serving only as an instructor for seminarians. Eichler suggests that Denning-er's son is one possible seminarian. Again in his letter of November 14, 1862, Eichler says,

It appears that the health of our associate Moldehnke is beginning to deteriorate due to his excessive burdens. Wouldn't it be possible for you to assign him for the winter to a less active position of training individuals for the Seminary?

Moldehnke's health was obviously a factor throughout his five years in Synod, and even after that. The 1865 Convention made it a point to try to get him some time for resting (p18). And Moldehnke himself says in his letter of June 19, 1866 that his health would not permit him to undertake the seven-month missionary trip enjoined upon him by the 1866 Convention. After his return to Germany he was unable to preach for a six-week period in the spring of 1868, and was also laid up from October 1 until Christmas of that year.

The trouble with Moldehnke's professorship began after the 1863 Convention, when the Synod made it official, and the Vereine got the impression that this might turn out to be a permanent full-time arrangement. The Langenbergers reacted first by withdrawing their annual stipend of \$100 for the Reisepredigt. Berlin was quite a bit more charitable (they had to be, since Eichler was the one who had suggested that Moldehnke take a break in the first place), but they too made it clear that Moldehnke's professorship should be only a temporary thing. Koehler attributes this insistence to Eichler's preference for Giese over Moldehnke, and claims that Eichler was only reconciled by the prospect of a future professorship for Giese.⁶ There is undoubtedly a lot of truth to that; in fact, Giese had his sights set on Seminary, undoubtedly as a result of Eichler's letters. In a letter of April 19 of the following year, Kern reports that Giese is keeping a congregation in suspense because he's just sitting around waiting for his call to Seminary (which Eichler hoped would materialize by Easter of that year).

But in August of 1863 it seems that the Langenbergers' withdrawal of the \$100 was every bit as important as Eichler's favoritism for Giese. Perhaps there's a bit of rivalry implied here between the two Vereine. Eichler writes several paragraphs on how the Langenbergers acted so hastily, not even consulting Berlin. If the Synod promises to send Moldehnke back as Reiseprediger next year, perhaps Langenberg will reconsider their withdrawal. Eichler says in his August 27 letter,

I earnestly hope that the proceedings with Moldehnke are going to last only until the end of next winter. Giese should then be substituted for Moldehnke, and until then a second qualified teacher should be secured. In my opinion Moldehnke must continue as Reiseprediger.

Even here, though, there is some question about Moldehnke's competence as head of the Seminary, Eichler continues,

In regard to the Seminary it appears to me at present to be of utmost importance that you accept only students who already have a fair amount of education; I'm very much afraid that in this matter Moldehnke isn't cautious enough. For example he writes about one who doesn't know anything but who intends to do a very fine job. Well, with people like that you can beat your head against the wall for a decade. Please write to America on this point also.

Still, the reason Eichler gives for the replacement by Giese is the desire to keep Moldehnke as Reiseprediger. And this desire of Eichler's, as I said, may have been the motivating factor for the Synod's approval of Moldehnke's missionary trips during the school year; by allowing him to function as Reiseprediger, they perhaps hoped to satisfy the Vereine and still not give up their seminary professor or have to exchange him for the less confessional Giese. Kowalke says, "It is more than likely" that Moldehnke undertook these journies out of loyalty to the Mission Societies which had sent him.⁷

Apparently the Synod did not reply directly to this matter (unfortunately the Synod was not in the habit of keeping copies of its letters on file, and Koehler was unable to locate these letters in Germany, as he states on p209 of his history), and so Eichler wrote a very extensive letter on September 11, 1863. He begins by saying, We've heard that you've decided to have Moldehnke stay at Watertown this fall. If that's only temporary, fine, because if it's permanent, it would be a definite detriment to the Reisepredigt, if not the end of it. We thank God for the good work and fruits which Moldehnke produced as Reiseprediger - it would sure be a shame to see all that come to an end, or even be impaired. Meanwhile the Langenbergers are taking back next year's stipend as a result of your decision. But then Eichler touches on Moldehnke's character, as he continues,

When you're first establishing and founding a seminary you need, above all, a qualified go-getter, and we have no doubt that you have such a man in the person of brother Moldehnke. On the other hand we're convinced that his special characteristics and gifts make him more qualified for the harrowing and difficult work of a Reiseprediger, than for the intimate, more gradual and exacting activity of a seminary teacher.

Eichler continues, Since you have other people in your Synod who can handle the Seminary, we'd like Moldehnke to remain in his former position. You made a good choice when you chose him to found the Seminary - you need a man, at the beginning, who can handle all the hard work involved in the outward ramifications, etc.

But in the future, in our opinion, brother Moldehnke could use the pound entrusted to him more profitably in the continuation of the position which he occupied up until now, more than you could use it in the leadership of the Seminary.

We don't doubt for one second that you possess in your Synod workers who can cope with the Seminary assignment.

(Specifically, you have Giese, who)

possesses very massive philological and theological knowledge,

rare initiative, has the saving truth deep within him, and after various struggles is not about to let go of it, and will without a doubt have acquired the necessary knowledge of the land and the English by Easter next year.

Eichler states that there wouldn't be any problems at all with Giesé's transfer to Seminary. Please give us your decisions on these matters.

It's possible that Eichler knew more about Moldehnke than the Synod did. Koehler claims that Eichler's opinion of Moldehnke was later borne out by the developments at Seminary.⁸ It's also possible, as Koehler says, that Eichler, who was a "Union man" according to Bading,⁹ was upset by Moldehnke's confessionalism,

Although Moldehnke wasn't nearly confessional enough to fit into the present Wisconsin Synod, he was considerably more confessional than the Vereine would have liked. He often got into scraps on his missionary journeys (including a long drawn-out controversy concerning a congregation in Portage which was dissatisfied with its legalistic Iowa Synod pastor, and which Moldehnke attempted to lure into the Wisconsin Synod fold); and apparently he antagonized the Vereine by saying that he would never again go to the Reformed people. He fought Freemasonry in Watertown as well as in Redwing, Minnesota, although it's possible that the Vereine were in agreement with his stand in this matter. He counselled the Minnesota Synod not to join the General Synod. At the 1865 Wisconsin Synod Convention he was the chairman of the colloquium, and he read the paper (Darstellung der modernen deutschen Theologie von lutherischen Standpunkten aus) which affirmed subscription to the Lutheran Confessions, and led to the confessional pledge resolution. Of course, Eichler complained on numerous occasions about the whole idea of a colloquy for men sent out by the Vereine, most vehemently, perhaps, in his letter of April 22, 1866, in which he compares the Synod's process to the Inquisition; and Moldehnke's involvement in this matter probably strengthened Eichler's reservations about him. But of course Moldehnke didn't have nearly as many scruples about unionism as we do today. Eichler himself later describes Moldehnke as a man "who surely won't have any scruples about accepting a pastorate from Union church authorities," and in that same letter (of December 9, 1866), Eichler claims that Moldehnke "has expressed horror of every association with us - though not with our money....," an opinion which had also been expressed about Bading, and in fact about the entire Synod. Strangely enough, Moldehnke complains about this same thing with reference to the Missouri Synod; he says that one wonders about the Lutheran preachers who take money from the Union Vereine instead of thinking about the Good Samaritan - you can be a friend of the Lutheran Church even if you come from the Prussian Landeskirche.¹⁰ But this statement possibly reflects a change in Moldehnke's attitude (combined with a change in Synod) after he had been in the Union (under protest, it seems) for over a year. In an open letter he sent to the Gemeinde-Blatt in 1868, which is prefaced by the remark of the editor that the Synod is not in agreement with certain of Moldehnke's views on the Union and the

Prussian Landeskirche, Moldehnke says it's easy to condemn the state church when you're in America and removed from the scene.¹¹ This statement is reminiscent of attitudes today also; things are black and white when they're viewed objectively, from a distance; but in real life, emotions and feelings and convenience often get in the way of theology and truth and right conduct; it's easy to point out the evils of racism until you're called to a congregation in which that attitude prevails; and it's easy to see some of the more unseemly aspects of student life until you're lulled to sleep by constant contact with such an environment; in fact, it's easy to say that all unbelievers are on their way to hell until you're in close contact with outwardly fine people, or mistreated, or suffering people, who don't believe in Jesus.

In the end, however, Moldehnke's better mind seems to have won out; his letter from Prussia dated May 17, 1868 indicates that the views which he had expressed in his letter to the Gemeinde-Blatt were still much more confessional than those of the Prussian Union. He says,

I would not be unwilling...to accept a position in America - especially, above all, on account of my confessional position, due to which the Oberkirchenrath looks askance at me, and is already protesting because of my open letter in the Gemeinde-Blatt.

He also hints at this in a postscript to the same letter, saying,

You know, it really isn't any fun to sell everything you own and move far away again; if only Christian love ruled everywhere and was joined with faith - in practice as well as in theory.

He makes it even more explicit in his next letter, of February 25, 1869, in which he states that he's a conscientious opponent of the Prussian Union and for that reason he just can't stay any longer. This decision is proof that he was sincere when he wrote, "An honorable war is better than a perverse peace."¹² This, of course, still didn't make him a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran, for in those same letters he complains about the increasing narrow-mindedness of the Synod. In his 1868 letter he says,

In Number 2 of the Ansiedler I read a totally disgusting article about the Wisconsin Synod; the article publicly exposes the Synod's questionable practices. I wouldn't have been able to go along with such a disgrace. Why in the world the Synod broke with the Vereine, when these societies were the sole sources of supply for candidates, I just can't understand....In Fond du Lac, on the occasion of the Convention (a sad recollection), I warned the Synod about sinking into dead formalism as a result of narrow-mindedness. A fresh, rousing wind has to blow; but then - as lies so painfully in my memory - the love in the Synod has dwindled terribly - and, as with your trip to Germany, which now has turned out to be unfortunate in many respects, the whole course of the Synod has taken an unfavorable direction. I would gladly have remained a lot longer in a field which meant so much to me, and would have made only a temporary visit to my homeland, where I am still an outsider in regard to the church scene anyway. But this is how God has directed things, and as far as the earthly things and the love of the congregation goes, He gave me a position where I am treated so respectably that things couldn't possibly be better.

After his return to America Moldehnke is said to have been at war, also, with several doctrines of the Missouri Synod.¹³

Giese was apparently much less confessional than Moldehnke. A glance at Giese's letters of November, 1864, indicates that he was embroiled in some sort of protest over the Synod's actions in regard to Eichler. And at the 1866 Convention he informed the Synod that he was opposed to doctrinal union, but not to corporate union. The minutes of that meeting unfortunately don't state the connecting links between the withdrawal of Moldehnke and Giese's statement, but sometime within the next year he left the Synod (p30). Perhaps his only reason for hanging on as long as he did was his hope for a professorship, which was shattered by Hoenecke's appointment.

But whether the relative confessionalism of Moldehnke compared with Giese was a factor in Eichler's preference for the latter already in September, 1863, or whether Eichler simply had more insight into the character of each of these men, or whether Eichler was simply scared off by Moldehnke's preliminary reports concerning the applicants for Seminary, is hard to say. The latter view is upheld by the final paragraph on this matter in Eichler's September 11 letter, in which he says,

It appears very important to us that you accept only such students as already possess a suitable amount of previous education. Where such a background is lacking, the students demand a totally disproportionate amount of time until the completion of their studies, and this results not only in significantly increased costs to the institution, but also in a general loss of interest on the part of the students. Perhaps we can work together here in Germany to produce qualified seminarians; if your Synod would like this, let us know what conditions you want fulfilled.

It's probable that Moldehnke and the Synod recognized the problem. Kowalke astutely observes that the advertisement for students at Northwestern in the first issue of the Gemeinde-Blatt does not even mention the fact that Northwestern is a preministerial school (this is true of the notice on p4, though on p2 the appeal for students does hint in the opposite direction by not really differentiating between the Seminary and the College; prospective students are looked at as prospective ministers, as is the case today; this article on p2 contains editorial comments about the necessity for sacrifice on the part of both students and parents, comments against the service of Mammon, and the citation of a reproach by the Methodists, who mock the Synod when it talks about the shortage of preachers, when in reality there are so many - namely, Methodists - that we don't need any more from Germany). It is true, however, that the notice on p4 lists only secular goals for Northwestern, and Kowalke may well be correct when he attributes this to the Synod's despair of finding students who will stick it out for six years. Perhaps Eichler's psychological insight is also an argument in favor of our Behany men today.

At any rate, within two years Moldehnke found out experientially that Eichler was correct. But was there really anything he could do about it? As far as recruiting students went, Moldehnke pretty much had to take what he could get. His

first student, Engelhart, didn't make the grade, and had to be dropped by October; the reason given at the 1864 Convention is "lack of a resolute Christian character" (p6). When he was lucky, Moldehnke acquired a student like Siegler (from November, 1863 until 1865), who had already had training in Germany, or Hoffmann (1864-5), who had also had three years of training. About Siegler Moldehnke could report at the 1864 Convention that he was making excellent progress; somehow, however, he was alienated by what he considered unfair treatment at the hands of Moldehnke, and left to spend a year at St. Louis, an event which, Moldehnke later said, "caused me many restless hours"; Siegler did return in the fall of 1866 after Moldehnke was gone, and Moldehnke expresses his joy in his letter of May 17, 1868.

Moldehnke was despondent after the first year due to the lack of students. The next year 14 applied, but the Board was not satisfied with three of them. Hoffmann "passed in good standing" and was sent to Portage in 1865, but of the rest it seems that all but two dropped out. In the 1865-6 school year only three of the eight students seem to have been serious prospects for the ministry or teaching professions.

In the long run, then, it would be hard to uphold Eichler's accusation that Moldehnke wasn't fussy enough. In fact, if anything, Moldehnke proved to be too idealistic. This is evident in the rigorous schedule he set up for his students. In winter they rose at 6:00 A.M. for chapel at 6:30 and breakfast at 7:00; classes were held from 8:00 until 12:00 noon (with a short intermission), and apparently from 1:00 until 6:00 in the afternoon, with some variation depending on the day of the week. In summer everything began a half-hour earlier. But, as Kowalke points out, they needed all that classtime to cover the material "even with greatest brevity"; the ambitious curriculum included, for example, on Monday morning: dogmatics, church history, Old Testament exegesis, German, mathematics, and Latin; on Monday afternoons the students learned Greek New Testament, Greek grammar, English, Hebrew, Old Testament exegesis, history, and geography; Friday afternoons were easier, with only Greek and geometry, but Friday evenings were tied up with recitations and ex tempore speeches. Koehler claims that this course of studies shows "utter lack of organization," but admits that this impression might have been given due to the "hastily printed program," since Moldehnke, being somewhat experienced as an educator, should have known better; but Koehler does insist that Moldehnke "was a man devoted to multa and hence did not accomplish the multum."¹⁴

Strangely enough, Moldehnke later makes the same criticisms about the American educational system in general as Koehler made about him. He says, "In America you don't talk about a 'university' in the German sense of the word"; Harvard and Yale come the closest, but even they fall short. Then he goes on to criticize the Americans for trying to cram as much as possible into so short a time - everything's rush, rush, rush.¹⁵ In the light of that statement, it seems likely that Moldehnke was either trying to fit into the American mold, or, more probably, trying to make

up for the students' deficiencies by using a system which he knew was less than ideal. Or there is the remote possibility that Koehler's reservations are correct and that the printed curriculum is not an accurate indication of what actually took place.

On Saturdays and during free time the students were expected to perform maintenance work and make trips to collect from the neighboring farmers. Summer vacations were not part of the original program. Moldehnke regretted that they were necessary, because he was afraid that the students would return to school exhausted from their hard summer jobs (!). He later lamented that vacations cut in on a teacher's time for training his students.¹⁶ He thought that summers should be spent reviewing, reading literature connected with the courses, and, if possible, in educational travel. For that reason he appealed to the 1865 Convention to give the students more financial support, for buying clothing, etc. (p9).

Needless to say, the students who came couldn't, for the most part, cope with such an ambitious program, and so the schedule was revised, apparently by the time the College opened in September of 1865.¹⁷ But it was still quite rigorous, with only five hours per day of free time (those hours included meal times); at all other hours the students had to be either in the classroom or in the study room. No one was allowed to leave the grounds without permission. Each week one student served as a proctor, to awaken students, see that bedtime was observed, and enforce order.¹⁸

The discipline, also, left much to be desired. Moldehnke later referred to the age-old problems of parents who stand behind their children even when the children are in the wrong.¹⁹ He was apparently referring to elementary education here, but it's entirely possible that the problem carried through to the college and seminary level. The most serious case was a student by the name of Denke, a pietist and a rascal who was directly responsible for the resignation of the housemother, Mrs. Koester. This episode, and possibly others, led the Board of Trustees to discuss and set up more specific and stringent rules and regulations for the Seminary and the College at the 1866 Convention, and to call an "inspector" who would wield more power over the students, particularly in their relation to the "weiblichem Geschlecht" (pp13, 15, 21). This action on the part of the Board was what led directly to Moldehnke's withdrawal, as Moldehnke states in his letter of resignation.

By the time of the 1865 Convention Moldehnke had already despaired of attracting students from our own congregations. He complains about how materialistic Americans are, and for that reason thinks that the lack of students is permanent (p13). And of course most of those who do come from our own congregations are not qualified. For these reasons he proposed the idea of founding a proseminary in Germany to provide students with their basic training; the students would then be sent to Watertown to complete their seminary education. There shouldn't be any problems with this arrangement, since Wisconsin has lots of land but not enough men, while Germany has too many men; so recruitment would be easy - and besides, many Germans want to emigrate

anyway. Furthermore, the Missouri Synod had connections with such a school in Steeden, in Nassaw, since the early 1860's, and through that school eventually acquired over 200 students for Ft. Wayne and St. Louis.²⁰

At that 1865 Convention a committee was set up to contact a Pastor Lohmann in Glowitz and ask him to set up such an institution, in which he would teach elementary subjects, Bible history, catechism, and, if possible, ancient languages. The committee was to make it clear to Lohmann that he couldn't count on any financial support from the Synod, but would have to get it in Germany (p20). At the next Convention it was reported that Eichler was favorable to the idea (pp14-15), although his letter of April 22, 1866 shows that he was disgusted with Moldehnke for sending Lohmann mandates on how to run the proposed institution; Eichler felt that Lohmann should be allowed to set up his own program; he also suggests that the Synod could send Lohmann the interest ~~money from some financial (?) holdings which he claims the Synod possessed.~~ *the money Bading collected during his tour of Prussia.*

In 1866 Moldehnke reported to the Convention that he had corresponded with Hengstenberg, the Oberkirchenrath, and Klieforth on this matter; he sees many difficulties in connection with setting up the proseminary, but the project will succeed, God willing, and then there will be more students, so that life at Seminary will be more pleasant both for the students and for the professor. (p16).

In his farewell notice in the Gemeinde-Blatt (where it is stated that he was departing on August 11 for Germany, a date at variance with Kowalke's August 4²¹) Moldehnke claims that the main reason for his departure, aside from a much-needed rest to recover his health, is to recruit new strength in Germany for the Church in Wisconsin and Minnesota.²² He had stated in a previous issue that the Synod needed eight preachers immediately to fill long vacancies.²³ (Similarly, according to Eichler's letter of August 16, 1863, Moldehnke had at one time demanded ten preachers from Germany without delay.) When he actually reached Germany, however, he met with little success, partly due to Eichler's resistance (cf. Eichler's letter of December 9, 1866, quoted in Koehler,²⁴ in which he states, "That our Society eventually would not be inclined to entertain relations with a proseminary to be founded by Mr. Moldehnke, I think I may at once take for granted.") But Lohmann's own financial difficulties, as indicated by Eichler's letters of late 1866, made the proseminary project impossible. The Synod, as well as Moldehnke, turned to several other pastors in Germany, but nothing came of these efforts. In retrospect, as Kowalke says, it's probably a good thing that the project failed - the Synod had enough trouble with one school.²⁵ Also, it was about time to untie the apron strings and break the dependence on Europe.

Moldehnke himself was soon too busy in East Prussia to do any active recruitment; he was given a parish not far from the Polish border with 10,000 souls - 8000 of them Polish, 2000 German; each year he communed 6000, baptized 450, buried

400, instructed 600 in confirmation class (?), and performed 100 marriages, in addition to supervising 23 schools (Kowalke says 24) with 1300 children.²⁶ As he says, the call which he took to recover from the fatigue of American life didn't turn out to be very restful.²⁷ Nevertheless, he did have time to write his "Fünf Jahre in Amerika" series for Hengstenberg's journal; included in that series are some appeals for manpower in America.²⁸ At any rate, to say that Moldehnke was blind to the necessity of acquiring qualified students, as Eichler implies in his September 11, 1863 letter, is misleading.

By October 16, 1863, Bading had obviously responded to Eichler (again, Bading's letter, like virtually all of our correspondence to Europe, is lost), and Eichler replied

As far as I can see, we have to stick with our decision concerning the Seminary. I admit that Moldehnke was the right man for getting the Seminary started, and that it's necessary for him to remain there until Easter; but for the further, that is, the inner, development of the institution, he is not suited, and is decidedly outclassed in virtually every field of knowledge by Giese..., who is also a man of considerable initiative and an iron will, and by Easter will be adequately oriented. If Giese wasn't there I myself would cast my vote for Moldehnke. But as it is, I'm convinced that things would run more smoothly in every respect if Giese would go to the Seminary and Moldehnke to the Reisepredigt.

Finally on December 22, 1863 Bading writes to Moldehnke,

I've exchanged several letters with Eichler concerning the status of the Seminary. I'm sticking up for you and he sides with Giese. Eventually the question is going to come to you as to whether you want to be Reiseprediger again. For that you have already declared yourself willing, as Eichler writes to me.

It's true that on October 25, 1863 Moldehnke had written, to Reim at least (and probably to Eichler) that he would like to go to Minnesota as a Reiseprediger, because he felt he'd be better off there. Eichler mentions this desire of Moldehnke's in his letter of November 20, 1863, and adds that the Langenbergers will pay their share if Moldehnke stays on as Reiseprediger; in this letter Eichler also states that Giese belongs in a city. And in Eichler's letter of December 8 he again insists that Giese is qualified to take over the Seminary, and he refers to the fact that Moldehnke himself expressed the desire to go to Minnesota; and offers to increase Moldehnke's salary.

Exactly one year after this October 25 letter Moldehnke was to write again to Reim and state very bluntly that, because of the way he and his wife had been treated at the Seminary, he was seeking a position with Fachtmann in Minnesota. Perhaps his participation in the Minnesota Convention of 1864 had increased his interest; and as a result of this convention the Minnesota Synod had asked the Wisconsin Synod for Moldehnke as a Reiseprediger. He also seems to have been a rather influential figure at Minnesota's 1866 Convention. But he never seems to have gained official approval for any long-term involvement in Minnesota until the spring of 1866, when he made the nine-week trip which he recounts in some detail in the Gemeinde-Blatt;²⁹ his account

shows an obvious love for the work, mixed with some reservations and disappointment.

The 1864 Convention finally acted on the matter of Moldehnke's tenure. The minutes reveal an awareness of Giese's presence and Eichler's attitude; the question was, Should they stick with Moldehnke or make a new choice for seminary professor? (p13) At first they seemed to be postponing the issue, but finally they gave Moldehnke a vote of thanks (p22) and decided to have him continue (p24). What their motive behind this action was, in the face of the continuous objections from Berlin, is hard to say. Perhaps they honestly felt that he was the man for the job; perhaps they thought that he'd take it as a personal affront if they released him (as he, in fact, did, two years later); but perhaps there's a slight touch of independence manifested in their actions - they're not about to take just any orders from the Vereine.

Nor do his synodical brethren seem to reprimand Moldehnke when, later that year, he writes a letter to Griebe in Germany complaining about Eichler, at the risk, and possibly with the result, of further antagonizing Berlin, the one Verein which still was willing to put up with Wisconsin's increasing confessionalism and independence. Regarding this letter Eichler writes, in a letter dated January 3, 1864 (which Koehler corrects to 1865),

I'm really amazed at Moldehnke for finally venting his wrath by writing Griebe a letter filled with accusations against me,.... I just don't understand Moldehnke. Admittedly I am sure that Giese is more useful for the Seminary than Moldehnke is, but that's not a personal affront against him. - would you take it as a personal insult if I said that you weren't suited for a professorship at a school of higher learning? And even if I have at times considered or declared Moldehnke unuseful, I still hold him very dear in spite of his anger, I treasure him highly on account of his fine qualities, I rejoice that he has attained confessional purity, and I just wish, lastly, that the dross of fleshly ardor would fall off from the silver of this acknowledgment.

Moldehnke's letter to Griebe was undoubtedly an offshoot of his "volatile temperament," as Koehler calls it, combined with the fact that conditions at the Seminary kept going from bad to worse. Moldehnke wrote to Reim on October 25, 1864,

First of all, I want to inform you that Mrs. Koester just can't take it any more. So Goldammer and Luke (Lute? Lude?) have made fools of us....Why did they let Hilgers go? It's inexcusable to keep burdening my wife more and more in her condition just to save some money. I don't think there's a woman in the whole Synod who's imposed upon that much.

The suggestions of Huber have likewise irked me, and the actions of the Trustees are a matter of total regret for me, since they seem to think that I can handle the whole burden alone.

I am hereby letting you know that my wife is giving up the upkeep of the Seminary; and I will likewise be looking for another position. Therefore see to it in due time, because if you don't want everything to fall to pieces, you have to show some concern for your teacher and students. It's just finally getting to be too much, the way I have to wear myself out and watch my wife wear herself out. I'd like to get together with Fachtmann in Minnesota, as has been my intention for some time now. You can certainly call Hoenecke or someone else here.

So again, there's the wife lurking in the background, and possibly in the fore-ground. How much work she actually had, and how much of her attitude of 1860 she still retained, and how much her attitude influenced her husband, is hard to say, though as late as February 25, 1869, when Moldehnke was planning to head from Prussia to New York, he writes, "My wife won't be easily persuaded to leave Germany." In 1864 she did prepare the meals, and probably did some of the cleaning, and Mrs. Koester's attitude probably rubbed off on her, or vice versa.

But aside from his wife's attitude and condition, Moldehnke himself had been severely overburdened ever since he came to Seminary. The actual instruction of students apparently wasn't much of a problem for him; besides the fact he was one of the men who "knew their stuff," as Koehler says,³⁰ there simply were not that many students to worry about. During the 1863-4 school year there were only Siegler, Engelhardt (temporarily), and two non-ministerial students, Gaebler and Gamm. The next year 14 students applied, but three were turned down, and of the rest it seems that all but two dropped out³¹ (not including Hoffmann, apparently). Moldehnke began the 1865-6 school year with eight students, but only three of them seem to have been serious about a seminary education - two training for the ministry, one for teaching. And even when the College was added, it was apparently not an unbearable burden on Moldehnke, since there were never that many students, and also, extra teachers were called. The 1865 school year began with 66 college students and Moldehnke and Martin as the only teachers; but in the second term Seemann joined the faculty as a Latin and German teacher, Kaltenbrunn as an English and arithmetic teacher, and Max Gaebler helped out with singing twice a week.³²

The other assigned duties which Moldehnke had at this time were the Reisepredigt (part-time) and the vacancy pastorate of Bading's congregation while the latter was on his famous trip to Europe. The work as Reiseprediger, as I said, was not very extensive until the nine-week trip to Minnesota in the spring of 1866; but there does seem to have been quite a bit done in the summer of 1864; although there are no records of this, I assume that it was during that summer that Moldehnke made the trip to Iowa which Koehler refers to.³³ Or did this come later, since the 1866 Convention Report makes reference to Moldehnke's participation in a discussion with the Iowa Synod? (p9).

Bading's congregation in Watertown turned out to be a beast to handle. Besides being a large congregation and keeping Moldehnke busy just with the ordinary duties (he taught 30 students, according to an undated letter from 1863), it was almost torn apart by a struggle over the lodge issue. Later Moldehnke was to describe the strife with the Odd Fellows (apparently seven prominent men were involved), saying that the whole city was against him, but God's side won out; during the course of the struggle people were trying to find out whether he was an alien, with the intent of getting him drafted into the army; and they would write anonymous letters.³⁴

All these storms, I believe, Moldehnke could have weathered. He never complained about his assigned work; in fact during the 1865-6 school year he took care of the vacancy at Columbus from Christmas to Easter (1866 Convention, p16); and he reported with pride to the 1865 Convention that he and his older students had often served neighboring vacant congregations (pp4, 9). Neither did he balk at the added burden of the College when it opened (aside from the disciplinary difficulties which he didn't feel he was responsible for). And he certainly had no hesitation about taking on the added task of the Gemeinde-Blatt editorship when the paper came into being in September, 1865; in fact, the whole idea seems to have been his. In his letter of February 2, 1865, from New York, he relates his impressions of the New York Herald, and expresses his interest in starting a publication of our own Synod. He was the one who suggested the matter to the 1865 Convention, indicating three ways to go about it; the Synod decided on the third way, which involved a private writing and editing combined with a printing by a professional (p22).

All these assignments Moldehnke gladly accepted. But he could not accept the lack of support from Synod, not only in manpower, but also financially. Already in a letter of August 24, 1864, Hoenecke had written that Moldehnke needed support. Moldehnke reports at the 1865 Convention that he had made three collection trips during the course of the school year, visiting Racine, Fond du Lac, and Oakwood; and then, in addition (?), he even went to Pennsylvania and New York - a trip which took him away from the Seminary for 3½ weeks in February, but met with little success; he attributes his failure out East to the fact that the people there had their own seminary to support in Philadelphia, besides the general hardships of war and the confusion caused by the troops toward the War's end. Having given up all prospects of financial success, all he could do was try to establish friendly relations with individuals and congregations there (p9). He did, in fact, meet Martin on that trip, and convince him to resign his position and come to Watertown. Whether Moldehnke returned in summer, as he planned according to his February 6 letter, I don't know. In his annual report Reim expressed his disappointment in the Synod's lack of support for Seminary in spite of two calls for help (p4), and Moldehnke seconded that opinion in his report. He did concede the fact that conditions were rough due to the war, and that the harvest had been poor, and that conditions in some congregations had made it impossible for pastors to be concerned about any more than their own needs; but he stated that after all we've gotten from Germany, it's time that we start supporting our own Seminary (pp8-9). The Synod did discuss the need to publicize the Seminary project as a result of this report (p13), and in a later session voted to thank him for both his concern for the students and his concern with the building, to help him with his heavy burden by means of prayers and financial support, and to have the Board of Trustees get him the help he needed (p18). This help included official procedures and added manpower for future collection trips. It should be

noted that one of the next points in the minutes involves a dispute between the Board of Trustees and the Visitors; this undoubtedly also weighed heavily on Moldehnke, as had the long drawn-out difficulties with the charter and constitution for the Seminary, and later for the College.

Though the 1865 Convention gave Moldehnke help, the financial difficulties were by no means solved. Things looked good in September; due to vigorous collecting (perhaps this implies that Moldehnke did return out East during the summer?) the debt for the College and Seminary was only \$1400 at the beginning of the school year; that wasn't bad, considering the fact that the total cost was between \$16,900 (Moldehnke's estimate) and \$22,000 (Koehler's estimate).³⁵ But things went wrong and in October a notice appeared in the Gemeinde-Blatt asking for interest-free loans because the Seminary had run out of money. Another collection trip was required by the end of November; Moldehnke went to Manitowoc, Green Bay, DePere, Morrison, Wrightstown, etc.³⁶ Goldammer went elsewhere, and later Sieker was to join the crusade. The December Gemeinde-Blatt contains a notice that the buildings are completed, but the unpaid bills have exceeded the treasury by \$2700 (this figure was apparently computed before the November-December collection was brought in).

But the final straw did not come in the form of a financial setback. I have already recounted what took place at the 1866 Convention. Less than a week after that Convention Moldehnke wrote his very bitter letter of resignation, which reads as follows:

Watertown, Wisc. June 19,
1866

Honorable Mr. President,

As soon as I returned home and spoke with several Synod associates, it became clear to me that I could not keep my position. I was called by the Synod as a theological professor, not as a dorm father. Nevertheless, out of necessity I encountered innumerable difficulties, which lay outside of the proper sphere of my call. How could I deny that things should have been handled much better! But that I have been condemned for not being able to maintain discipline, and for having had difficulties with discipline also during the last year - well, I just can't figure that out. I guess I'm just not sure what my call as theological professor involves. The fact that I had extensive dealings with an unruly college student is a completely different matter; but still, I think that I had a right to complain, since I was burdened with him in several classes - after all, the other teachers who hardly had anything to do with him keep complaining endlessly. For the very reason that I am concerned about discipline, I became deeply involved with several English boys, and my successors will soon understand what I'm talking about. I firmly deny that Denke's termination should be reckoned to my account, but I won't attempt to piece together the circumstances which entangled him, only I point out that previously Siegler also got himself into a precarious position, not through me, but through those same circumstances. And only through a complete change of the dorm supervision, which is supposed to take place on September 1 of this year, can a termination similar to Denke's be guarded against.

Now I'll come to the consideration of the position to which I have been appointed by the honorable Synod. Although I have been assigned as a theologian and professor and in this connection there has been no complaint raised against me, nevertheless, according to the wording of the Committee Report to appoint an inspector who can at the same time instruct, the very next proposal was to call an inspector who should at the same time be a theological professor. Now, as I pointed out in Fond du Lac, two theological professors are too many; consequently I have been virtually forced out of my position in an underhanded way, without anyone actually coming right out and saying so. My resignation, which I had no choice but to offer if I didn't want to lose all respect, was not accepted; but now I found out that this non-acceptance was due to this reason: "He worked too much, we shouldn't wear him out"; "If he had said he was going to Germany, then we would have gladly accepted his resignation"; "Who's going to tell him he should go to Germany?" Remarks such as these naturally are making life bitter for me; things like this are said in order to avoid hurting my feelings, but they're just a cover-up for the real reason. As a front they tell me that they're offering me the Reisepredigt so that I don't get worn out; and without suspecting what their real intention was when they spoke of my travels, I joined in their discussions. But now I hear that the Synod expects me to travel for seven months. Well, they will have to admit that I know more than they do about what condition my bodily strength is in. Physically I'm so low that I couldn't possibly undertake such difficult travels. In addition, spreading myself so thin goes against my grain; I would neither be able to edit the Gemeinde-Blatt nor carry out my duties in my capacity as professor; and inwardly I would be even more torn apart than I already am. As I said previously to Pastor Bading and others, if a dorm father could have been acquired who would also teach at the College, then naturally my course would be all laid out before me - my duty being to remain here - and everything would be clear to me. But now, in a manner which I cannot comprehend and which is totally unexpected, my whole position has gone down the drain, and I can't see any other course than to go to Germany. You can imagine what thoughts and feelings I will have as I go over there. Being bound by no promise or fixed date, I permit myself to inform you hereby that I will take the first opportunity which presents itself to go to Germany. The Lord also will not forsake me there.

You yourself, highly esteemed Mr. President, will understand, since you are a man full of insight and good judgment, that after such events it has become impossible for me to remain here. I simply ask you to put yourself into my place; and I assure you that nothing personal has moved me to my decision; it's just the way things turned out.

You would be doing me a big favor if you would send these lines, hastily thrown together as they are, over to the Board of Trustees.

With full respect,

E. Fr. Moldehnke

Then, after a final missionary trip through Wisconsin and into Minnesota, he departed for Germany on August 11 (August 4?), 1866.³⁷

The question is, Was he forced out of his position, or did he misconstrue the situation? It's impossible to say. The events of the 1866 Convention could be interpreted either way. Rather early in the Convention, in the President's Address, Streissguth had called for a decision on the Reisepredigt (p9). Was the reinstatement of that position simply a bait which the Synod was dangling before Moldehnke's

eyes in hopes of luring him away from the Seminary? Discussions at subsequent Conventions prove that the Synod really did consider the Reispredigt an important position, but that does not conclusively prove that the discussion wasn't a setup in 1866. The actual reasons which the Board gave for recommending Hoenecke for the Seminary are the fact that Moldehnke was considering a trip to Germany and that Mrs. Koester, the housemother, had decided to quit (p15). Both reasons are true, but both could easily be construed as subtle, or not-so-subtle, hints for Moldehnke to depart, as assumptions that he wasn't going to be around any more; the intent in mentioning Hoenecke after stating that Mrs. Koester is quitting is obvious: Hoenecke's wife, rather than Moldehnke's, was expected to take over Mrs. Koester's duties (as in fact she later did); does this intent assume that Mrs. Moldehnke is no longer going to be around, or is it merely an acknowledgment of her weakness, as indicated in Moldehnke's letter of October 25, 1864? A perusal of the Board minutes, if they are still in existence, might clear up a lot of things.

It goes without saying that Moldehnke did not resign out of any personal animosity toward Hoenecke. In fact, at the 1864 Convention he himself had suggested Hoenecke as a German professor for the College (not for the Seminary, however!)(p13?).

Neither do confessional considerations seem to have played much of a part in the matter. It's true that on several occasions Moldehnke later blamed the Synod's increasingly tight confessionalism for what he considered a cold, unloving trend in the Synod's attitudes. Most notable are the opening lines of his letter of May 17, 1868, which I have already quoted. He also discusses this in the very first installment of his "Fünf Jahre in Amerika" series, when he speaks of a Missouri Synod pastor whom he met on the ship on his way to America and from whom he got a bad impression of the Missouri Synod; and then he adds that he later met Wyneken, who was an opponent of Christian liberty; he goes on to say that he doesn't like the looseness of Germany, but the Wisconsin Synod is becoming too rigid - they're given to divisiveness and exclusiveness.³⁸ In spite of this, however, in both of his letters to Bading he appears to be making overtures for a call back into the Synod. In his letter of May 17, 1868 he says,

That I, however, in spite of all my bitter experiences, still carry the American Church in my heart, and also the field in Wisconsin and Minnesota, I don't even have to prove. I'm gladly turning now to the East, writing here and there for the Lutheran and Missionary; and in case God so directs it, and the resistance of my wife is assuaged, I'm not at all unwilling to accept a position in America - especially, above all, on account of my confessional position, due to which the Oberkirchenrath is looking askance at me and is already protesting on account of my open letter in the Gemeinde-Blatt. A setup like the one I had in America: teaching, preaching, travelling, - that's what I long for; but nothing like that is offered to me here.

You should, however, have gone to Milwaukee and founded the College there, and left only a high school in Watertown. Milwaukee would have been the right field for your initiative.

He adds in a postscript that he'd like a position in which he could teach in the winter and travel in the summer: "A professorship would sound real good to me."

In his letter of February 25, 1869 he's quite a bit less subtle. After stating that, for reasons of conscience, he simply can't remain in the Union any longer, he writes,

I don't know yet what I should do. I have a call from the New York Synod, but my heart pulls me to the West. If a position would present itself in Wisconsin - in a city, though, since I have to send my children to school - then write me about it in New York care of Mr. Henry Ludwig, 29 Center Street.

It's unlikely that this change of heart and sudden longing for Wisconsin was brought about by a sudden confessional change on his part. What happened is that, due to his "volatile temperament," while in America he had begun having nostalgic reminiscences about his homeland. Several times during his final Gemeinde-Blatt article on his spring missionary journey he mentions how the scenery reminds him of Germany;³⁹ he reached the shores of his home, Wisconsin; it was his home, yet it was foreign, "for my heart calls Germany its beloved home here on earth."⁴⁰ When he actually reached Germany, however, the grass (literally) was not as green as he remembered; he is compelled to state axioms such as, No one learns to know his homeland during his youth, and, It doesn't look as good when you have to work for a living.⁴¹ He had previously expressed these same sentiments when he had his idealizations about the Reisepredigt shattered. He quotes Cicero's statement, "Sweet is the remembrance of troubles which lie in the past," and Ovid's, It's comfortable to watch a stormy sea from a safe harbor.⁴² But when actually in the field, he sometimes moaned and groaned and wished for the end of the trip in spite of his love for the work. And again, he mentions that his wife, or rather, 4-, 6-, and 9-week separations from her and the children, affected his attitude about travelling.⁴³

Beyond a doubt it was this volatility which made Moldehnke unsuitable for a seminary professorship, as Eichler had realized years before. Hoenecke wrote, one week after Moldehnke's letter of resignation, to the President,

You're being so secretive in handling Professor Moldehnke's intended trip to Germany. Here in the Synod everyone already knows about it. He announced it even before he gave you official notice about it, and when he announced it the people got the impression that the Synod had impinged on and degraded his honor. He said very little to me, and nothing at all to Martin; but I just happened to be at his house when he received from Hamburg, as a result of his and my request for aid, the funds for a vacation, and his family received half the cost of a return trip across the ocean. But I fear that he won't carry out his decision about the return trip, in spite of how much he talks about it. Upon reflection I say, "I fear," because he never will turn out to be a real blessing for the institution - if the curriculum and the subject matter isn't set up according to his plan of instruction, then, to use an illustration from construction work, "he always begins building the

house at the chimney." If anyone tried to place any restraints on him, he would accept them so poorly that all who would have to associate with him more closely would have their jobs and lives made miserable. The best thing is to let him quietly move away, in the hope and confidence that the Lord will let us progress farther with the smaller knowledge of our teachers than we have so far with the benefit of Moldehnke's greater knowledge.

That sounds harsh, but of course Hoenecke's assessment of the situation was correct. And, lovingly enough, the Synod decided to follow Hoenecke's advice and not add insult to injury. At the 1867 Convention it was reported that the Board had given Moldehnke an honorable release from his Seminary position, and Bading had done the same in regard to Moldehnke's Synod membership (p7). The Board's words describing Moldehnke are, "self-sacrificing industry and zeal in establishing and raising the standard of the institution and in training the students of the seminary and preparatory department."⁴⁴

Having returned to America in 1869 (Koehler makes a blatant error when he says "the '80's"⁴⁵), Moldehnke died in Plainfield, New York, on January 25, 1904, after, apparently, about 14 years in semi-retirement with a heart condition.⁴⁶ One final oversight needs to be mentioned; perhaps it's an oversight on my part, but I was unable to find a notice of his death in any of the Gemeinde-Blatt issues from around that date. Unless I missed it, or unless the date Kowalke gives for his death is highly erroneous, it does seem highly ungracious for a publication to ignore the death of its founder in this way. Perhaps the news never reached the editors. At any rate, it's highly unlikely that this oversight, removed in time by over 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ years, is any reflection of the attitudes of Moldehnke's contemporaries.

One final point, which hadn't struck me during all the time I'd been working on this paper, is Moldehnke's age. The man was only 26 years old when he was called to found and head the Seminary. He had written in his Reisebericht of August 27, 1862, that during one of his missionary journeys, at the end of May, 1862, in Waupun, "an old Lutheran didn't want to come to church, but said, 'What can such a young man teach us?'" And I seem to recall some references to Moldehnke's youth in several of Meyeringh's letters. He was not quite 30 years old when he left the Synod. I have no doubts that he became more stable later on. If he at times lacked Paul's virtue of being able to be content in all things, so do all of us. His personality and emotions can't be held against him. In fact, it's probable that this very inability to settle down was an asset to him in his work as Reisprediger. And for founding the Seminary, as well as for giving birth to the Synod's first official periodical, and probably for being instrumental in the Wisconsin Synod's eventual break with the German mission societies, we certainly owe inestimable thanks to Edward F. Moldehnke.

Mark R. Peiringsby

NOTES

- ¹E.F.Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre in Amerika," Part 12: "Die Synoden," Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 86, No. 11, February 5, 1870, p.118.
- ²John Philipp Koehler, The History of the Wisconsin Synod, Ed. Leigh D. Jordahl, (St. Cloud, Minnesota?: Faith - Life, Protestant Conference, 1938ff), p77; cf. also J.C.Jensson, American Lutheran Biographies, (Milwaukee: A.Houtkamp and Son, 1890), p525; and Meyeringh's letter of November 16, 1860.
- ³Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 3, Final Installment(?), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 103, December 23, 1868, p1226.
- ⁴E.E.Kowalke, Centennial Story: Northwestern College 1865-1965, (Watertown: Northwestern College, 1965), p51.
- ⁵Kowalke, p24.
- ⁶Koehler, p91.
- ⁷Kowalke, p51.
- ⁸Koehler, p112.
- ⁹Koehler, p91.
- ¹⁰Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 3, Final Installment (?), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 103, December 23, 1868, p1226.
- ¹¹Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 3, No. 23, August 1, 1868, p1.
- ¹²Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 8, Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 90, November 7, 1868, p1068.
- ¹³Jensson, p527.
- ¹⁴Koehler, p120.
- ¹⁵Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 6 (Die Schule), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 84, No. 52, June 30, 1869, p620.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p623.
- ¹⁷Kowalke, pp26-7.
- ¹⁸Kowalke, pp48-9.
- ¹⁹Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 6, Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 84, No. 52, June 30, 1869, p623.
- ²⁰Kowalke, p29.
- ²¹Kowalke, p50.
- ²²Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 1, No. 12, August 1, 1866, p4.
- ²³Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 1, No. 6, February 1, 1866, p3.
- ²⁴Koehler, p112.
- ²⁵Kowalke, p30.

- ²⁶ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 3, No. 17, May 1, 1868, p4.
- ²⁷ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 3, No. 7, December 1, 1867, pp2-3.
- ²⁸ The most moving of these appeals is found in Part 3, Final Installment, Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 103, December 23, 1868, pp1227-1230.
- ²⁹ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 1, No. 11, July 1, 1866, p3, and No. 12, August 1, 1866, pp2-4 and Vol. 2, No. 1, September 1, 1866, pp2-3.
- ³⁰ Koehler, p124.
- ³¹ Kowalke, p29.
- ³² Kowalke, p46.
- ³³ Koehler, p119.
- ³⁴ Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 8 (Secret Societies), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 90, November 7, 1868, p1068.
- ³⁵ Kowalke, p32.
- ³⁶ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 1, No. 5, January 1, 1866, p3.
- ³⁷ Kowalke, p50.
- ³⁸ Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 1 (Hinüber), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 82, p977(?).
- ³⁹ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 1, No. 12, August 1, 1866, p4.
- ⁴⁰ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 2, No. 1, September 1, 1866, p3.
- ⁴¹ Gemeinde-Blatt, Vol. 3, No. 17, May 1, 1868, p4.
- ⁴² Moldehnke, "Fünf Jahre," Part 2 (The New World), Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, Vol. 83, No. 100, p1185.
- ⁴³ Ibid., p1188.
- ⁴⁴ Arthur Hoermann, Our Northwestern College: The Story of its Origin and Growth, (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1915), p17.
- ⁴⁵ Koehler, p121.
- ⁴⁶ Kowalke, pp50-1.

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